DC #30

DIRECT CURRENTS

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Cover of the Month
GREEN ARROW #37

FROM THE KILLER SKIES... *ENEMY ACE* HARDCOVER GRAPHIC NOVEL

During the first World War he was the most feared killing machine in the skies over Europe.

Today he's an old man, sitting staring into space in a sanitarium on the coast of Germany. He's Hans Von Hammer, the once celebrated German ace in the "war to end all wars" . . . and this is his story in the **ENEMY ACE: WAR IDYLL HARDCOVER GRAPHIC NOVEL.**

In the beginning, Von Hammer doesn't believe he and the reporter who has come to visit him have anything in common, until they begin to compare war stories. The reporter's from Vietnam, Von Hammer's from World War I, triggering the old man's reminiscences about his personal turning point, when his work in the killing skies became less for country, and more for personal glory . . . when he became less a hero and more the killer.

The ENEMY ACE: WAR IDYLL HARDCOVER GRAPHIC NOVEL is a stunning tour de force of romantic idealism clashing with brutal reality in the hearts and souls of two veterans, written and fully painted by George Pratt. This 128-page comic book-sized graphic novel also contains sketchbook pages by Pratt.

ENEMY ACE: WAR IDYLL . . . 70 years isn't long enough to dull the horror of the killing skies.

BWAH-HA-HA-HA... *JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY*

What's 80 pages, is published every three months, and stars more heroes than you can shake a stick at?

JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY, that's what. And to launch the latest JL title, JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY #1 features the debut of a *new* group of super-heroes, the one that Booster Gold's been working so hard to put together since leaving the Justice League. He calls the group, which is backed by some of the country's biggest and most powerful corporations, the Conglomerate.

Booster's new pals and gals are Maxi-Man, Praxis, Gypsy, Echo, Vapor, and Reverb, but pretty soon Booster's got to wonder if their industry backers want them to be heroes . . . or corporate puppets. What he *doesn't* have to wonder is how the Justice League's going to react when the two groups come into conflict.

JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY #1 is written by Keith Giffen and J.M. DeMatteis, with art by Chris Sprouse and Bruce Patterson.

Eighty pages of Justice League action, adventure, and wackiness on a quarterly basis . . . we only hope it'll be enough.

FROM • THE EDITOR

It happens every now and then. The changing of the guard, that is. It's my pleasure to pick up where Peggy May left off as editor of DIRECT CURRENTS. Peggy left DC Comics in April to become director of marketing at a metropolitan area historical museum. Now I get to have all the fun as the purveyor of pithy prose and the conduit of comic colloquy to all our pals out there.

Your comments and questions, as always, are welcome, so please keep those cards and letters coming. Peggy did a fine job, and I'll do my best to get the scoop on all the DC books for you, but for now. . . .

Be good,

Tammy

ANNUAL EVENTS

The annuals just keep on coming with four offerings filling the July schedule.

First up is **ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN ANNUAL #2** featuring the meeting of the Man of Steel and the son of Brainiac, as L.E.G.I.O.N. '90's Vril Dox comes to Earth to exact his revenge against his hated father. And if Superman wants to prevent that from happening, he's going to have to get through Vril's bodyguard . . . a Daxamite as powerful as himself. Written by Dan Jurgens, with pencils by Bob McLeod, Curt Swan, and Kerry Gammill; inks by McLeod, John Byrne, and Dick Giordano; and a cover by Gammill and Byrne.

And speaking of Vril Dox, **L.E.G.I.O.N. '90 ANNUAL #1** is next on the list and follows the events of the ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN ANNUAL as Vril and his L.E.G.I.O.N. travel to Colu to settle the score with his father . . . with Superman still on hand to try to stop Vril from committing murder. The story is by Alan Grant, with art by Jim Fern and Jeff Albrecht and cover by Jerry Bingham.

Then we deal with a "Charade" in **LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES ANNUAL #1** as the sorceress Glorith destroys the planet Daxam . . . just for kicks. The Legion is determined to bring her to justice . . . except her shocking connection to one of the team may prevent that. Written by Tom and Mary Bierbaum, with art by Dougie Braithwaite, Larry Mahlstedt, and Doug Hazlewood; with a cover by Adam Hughes.

Last, but by no means least, is **TSR WORLDS COMICS ANNUAL #1**, which introduces the new SPELLJAMMER™ Comics monthly series as well as the concept of crossovers in the DC/TSR comics line. The 12-page SPELLJAMMER™ Comics host story is by Barbara Kesel and Michael Collins; ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is by Kate Novak-Grubb and Dan Reed; DRAGONLANCE is by Dan Mishkin and Dave Hoover; and FORGOTTEN REALMS by Jim Lowder and Gil Kane. This 80-page New Format anthology features a painted cover by Larry Elmore.

Paul Kupperberg, Writer
Tammy Brown, Editor

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Printed in Canada

SHE'S A MAN-KILLER... SHE'S THE *BREATHTAKER*

Siren. Temptress. Man-eater. Call Chase Darrow what you want, but whatever label you choose, the truth is she's the **BREATHTAKER**... a nice young woman who possesses the power to love a man to death. Chase Darrow is a succubus.

BREATHTAKER is part horror story, about a woman with the power to drain men of their very life force ... part romance, because those men are her willing victims ... part crime story, as Chase is forced to run from the government which has branded her a criminal ... and part super-hero story: The Man, a popular television and merchandising figure who also happens to have powers and abilities—beyond those of the average man—that he's going to use to hunt down and capture Chase in an effort to boost up his sagging Nielsen ratings.

BREATHTAKER is a four-book miniseries in the DC Comics Prestige Format, featuring story and full-color art by Mark Wheatley and Marc Hempel, and is suggested for mature readers.

BREATHTAKER ... it's like nothing you've ever read before.

JOURNEY TO THE STARS AND BEYOND ON THE *SPELLJAMMER*™

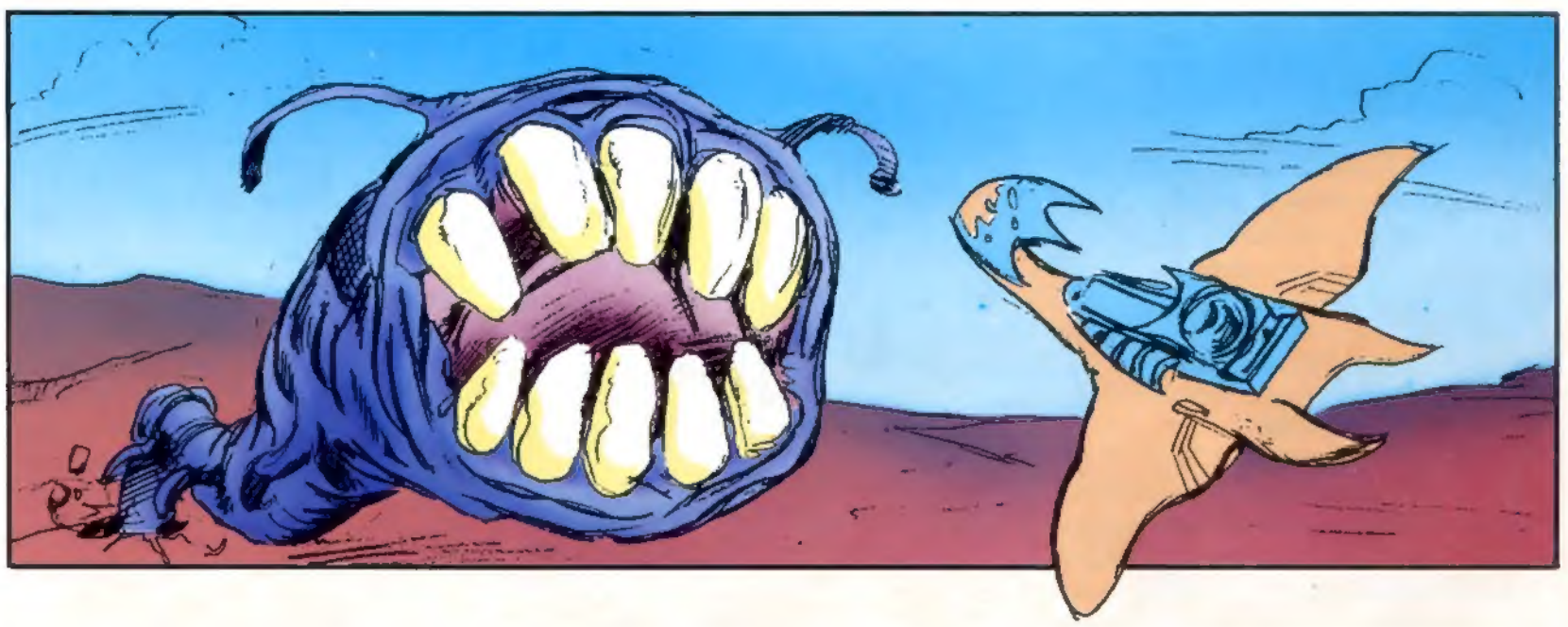
Imagine a universe where the laws of physics are based on the rules of magic. Where entire solar systems float on seas of highly flammable Phlogistan inside huge spheres, and massive living spaceships travel between the stars in their own self-contained atmospheres.

Wonder no longer, because all that describes the world of **SPELLJAMMER™ COMICS**, the latest entry in DC's line of TSR Comics.

The focus of this title of interstellar sword-and-sorcery is the crew of a mysterious living spaceship, the vehicle that will take us all among the various worlds of the TSR universe.

The SPELLJAMMER™ Comics New Format series (which makes its debut in this month's TSR WORLDS COMICS ANNUAL #1) is written by Barbara Kesel, with art by Michael Collins and Dan Panosian.

SPELLJAMMER™ COMICS #1 ... the magic starts here.



BOOKS SHIPPING IN JULY

☐ **ACTION COMICS #656**
Part 1 of the 3-part "Soul Search": With Jimmy Olsen and Jerry White at death's door, Superman has only one option to save their souls from eternal damnation—he must brave the fiery depths of Blaze's realm . . . alone! Continued in SUPERMAN #47. Written by Roger Stern, with art by Bob McLeod and Brett Breeding. Cover by Kerry Gammill and Breeding $.75

☐ **ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS™ #21**
Part 3 of the 4-part "Lunatics": Chaos reigns in Waterdeep as the pretender to the throne of the Moon Goddess sends her army against the friends of Luna. Written by Dan Mishkin, with art by Jan Duursema and Rick Magyar. Cover by Duursema. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #470**
Part 3 of the 3-part "Soul Search": Continued from SUPERMAN #47. The Man of Steel witnesses the ultimate sacrifice as someone lives . . . and someone dies. Written and pencilled by Dan Jurgens and inked by Art Thibert. Cover by Jurgens and Brett Breeding. $.75

☐ **ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN Annual #2**
Superman meets the son of Brainiac as L.E.G.I.O.N. '90's Vril Dox comes to Earth in search of his hated father. And just to make sure nobody gets in his way, Dox has brought along a bodyguard . . . a Daxamite every bit as powerful as Superman himself. Written by Dan Jurgens, pencilled by Bob McLeod, Curt Swan, and Kerry Gammill, and inked by McLeod, John Byrne, and Dick Giordano. Cover by Gammill and Byrne. $2.00

☐ **ANIMAL MAN #27**
A new chapter begins in the strange life of Buddy Baker as he tries to return to a normal life following his incredible odyssey. But why does his world seem so unfamiliar? And what is the secret behind his animalistic urges and flashbacks of primitive humanity? Written by Peter Milligan, with art by Chas Truog and Mark Farmer. Cover by Brian Bolland. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **THE ATLANTIS CHRONICLES #6**
(of a 7-issue maxiseries)
The Atlanteans make their first contact in millennia with surface dwellers . . . and the result is a war that brings about nobility and sacrifice. Written by Peter David, with art and cover by Esteban Maroto. $1.50

☐ **BATMAN #453**
Part 2 of the 3-part "Dark Knight, Dark City": Continued from BATMAN #452. The Riddler's crime spree turns violent . . . but when he foregoes the opportunity to kill the Dark Knight Detective, The Batman knows he's being used. But for what? Continues in BATMAN #454. Written by Peter Milligan, with art by Kieron Dwyer and Dennis Janke. $1.00

☐ **BATMAN #454**
Part 3 of the 3-part "Dark Knight, Dark City": Continued from BATMAN #453. The Riddler's secret is revealed . . . and The Batman is forced to battle the greatest evil he's ever faced. Written by Peter Milligan, with art by Kieron Dwyer and Dennis Janke. Cover by Mike Mignola and George Pratt. $1.00

☐ **BREATHTAKER #1**
(of a 4-book miniseries)
She's a siren . . . a temptress . . . a maneater. She's Chase Darrow, the Breathtaker . . . a nice young woman who has the power to love a man to death. Story, art, cover, and coloring by Mark Wheatley and Marc Hempel. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. Prestige Format.)* $4.95

☐ **BUGS BUNNY™ #3**
(of a 3-issue miniseries)
Bugs and Daffy's quest for the Plaztec Fudd heads takes the Warner Bros. gang to the farthest reaches of outer space as the wacky rabbit's miniseries rockets to its cosmic conclusion, with guest stars Porky Pig, Foghorn Leghorn, Elmer Fudd, Witch Hazel, Marvin the Martian, and many more. Written by Joey Cavalieri, with art by Chuck Fiala and John Costanza. $1.00

☐ **THE BUTCHER #5**
(of a 5-issue miniseries)
The Butcher has his final showdown with Corvus . . . 50,000 feet in the air, leaving one victor. And one corpse. Green Arrow guest-stars. Written by Mike Baron, with art by Shea Anton Pensa. Cover by Paris Cullins and Pensa. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)*

☐ **CAPTAIN ATOM #44**
Plastique and Captain Atom are in a fight to the death . . . except Cap refuses to kill, even to save his own life. Written by Greg Weisman and Cary Bates, with art by Rafael Kayanan and Romeo Tanghal. Cover by Pat Broderick. $1.00

☐ **CHECKMATE! #31**
Victor Cypher begins his ultimate march to power and only Checkmate is in any position to stop him from launching all-out war across the European countryside. Written by Paul Kupperberg with art by Gabriel Morrissette and John Statema. Cover by Steve Erwin and Mike Bair. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **THE DEMON #3**
The Demon Etrigan plots with his mom to overthrow the rulers of Hell . . . The Batman saves Jason Blood's friends from murder charges in Gotham . . . and Jason Blood leads the revolt of the lost souls against the grisly cone-creature. Written by Alan Grant, with art and cover by Val Semeiks and Denis Rodier. $1.50

☐ **DETECTIVE COMICS #620**
Continued from DETECTIVE COMICS #619. Within hours, Tim Drake's parents will be murdered by the Obeah Man . . . and The Batman still does nothing to try to save them. Continues in DETECTIVE COMICS #621. Published biweekly in June. Written by Alan Grant, with art by Norm Breyfogle and Steve Mitchell. Cover by Breyfogle. $1.00

☐ **DETECTIVE COMICS #621**
Continued from DETECTIVE COMICS #620. The Batman's finally learned where the Obeah Man holds Tim Drake's parents captive . . . but arrives too late to prevent tragedy. Written by Alan Grant, with art by Norm Breyfogle and Steve Mitchell. Cover by Breyfogle. $1.00

☐ **DOC SAVAGE #23**
Part 2 of a 3-part story: In 1937, Doc and his crew continue to battle the "Meteor Menace"—a fight first waged by Doc's own father. Written by Mike W. Barr, with art by Rod Whigham and Steve Montano. Painted cover by Adam Kubert. *(Deluxe Format)* $1.75

☐ **DR. FATE #20**
As the Anti-Fate's power spreads, we find out just what is inside the Salem Tower. Plus, learn some of the secrets Kent/Nabu has been keeping from Dr. Fate. The Phantom Stranger guest-stars. Written by J.M. DeMatteis, with art and cover by Shawn McManus. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **THE DOOM PATROL #36**
The Men from N.O.W.H.E.R.E. face the Doom Patrol in a showdown . . . and Rhea Jones at last emerges from her coma. Written by Grant Morrison, with art by guest artists Kelley Jones and Mark McKenna. Painted cover by Simon Bisley. *(New Format) $1.50*

☐ **DRAGONLANCE™ COMICS #23**
Part 2 of the 4-part "Taladas": When her ship crashes against the coast of the Taladas, Riva finds herself in a new world . . . and in a fight against a dragon, using a dragonlance™. Written by Dan Mishkin, with art by Ron Randall and Randy Elliott. Cover by Randall. *(New Format)* $1.50

☐ **THE DRAGONLANCE™ SAGA Graphic Novel #5**
Based on Book Two of the Second Volume of the *Dragonlance Chronicles* trilogy, DC continues the popular TSR DRAGONLANCE™ Graphic Novels as Sturm Brightblade is brought up on charges before the Solamnic Knights Council while Raistlin, in search of even more power, is caught in the Dragon Orb. This 80-page graphic novel is written by Roy Thomas, with art by Ron Randall and Gary Martin. Painted cover by Todd Cameron Hamilton. $12.95

☐ **EL DIABLO #13**
Part 1 of the 3-part "The River": Illegal immigrants are turning up dead in

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Dos Rios and El Diablo is determined to find out why, even if it means going undercover in Mexico. Written by Gerard Jones, with art and cover by Mike Parobeck and Paul Fricke. *(New Format)* $2.00

ENEMY ACE: WAR IDYLL Hardcover Graphic Novel
War is hell, but it never seemed to bother Hans Von Hammer, the German World War I ace. But now, years later, a Vietnam era veteran sits at the bedside of the Enemy Ace as both men deal with their pasts. This 128-page hardcover, comic book-sized graphic novel is written and painted by George Pratt. $24.95

FLASH #42
Whatever's haunting Tina McGee's artificial intelligence project has possessed her husband and co-workers, threatened her own sanity . . . and drawn Flash in to face an otherworldly attack from one of his oldest foes. Written by William Messner-Loebs, with art and cover by Greg LaRocque and José Marzan, Jr. $1.00

FORGOTTEN REALMS™ COMICS #14
Lich Mirantile's looking for a new wife . . . number 120, and the current object of his affections is Jasmine, whom he no doubt hopes to add to his collection of the previous 119 spouses he has preserved in the walls of his ice castle. Written by Jeff Grubb, with art and cover by R.A Morales and Dave Simons. *(New Format)* $1.50

GREEN ARROW #35
Part 1 of the 4-part "Black Arrow Saga": Ollie Queen's charged with sabotage and treason, his arrest leaving him to seek an unlikely ally . . . and his separation from Dinah puts an even greater strain on their relationship. Published bi-weekly in July. Written by Mike Grell, with art by Mark Jones and Bill Wray. Cover by Ed Hannigan and Dick Giordano. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.25

GREEN ARROW #36
Part 2 of the 4-part "Black Arrow Saga": While Ollie Queen languishes in jail, Black Canary is left with the task of recruiting an ally . . . or forcing an enemy to assist her. Published bi-weekly in July. Written by Mike Grell, with art by Mark Jones and Bill Wray. Cover by Ed Hannigan and Dick Giordano. (Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.) $1.25

GREEN ARROW #37
Part 3 of the 4-part "Black Arrow Saga": The plot to frame Green Arrow on drug charges builds as Black Canary and Shadō find all avenues to clearing his name leading to nothing but dead ends. Published bi-weekly in July. Written by Mike Grell, with art by Mark Jones and Bill Wray. Cover by Ed Hannigan and Dick Giordano. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.25

GREEN LANTERN #4
Cities are vanishing off the face of the Earth . . . all of them places once visited by Hal Jordan with Green Arrow and the "Old Timer" Guardian (in the classic GREEN LANTERN/GREEN ARROW #76-89). Written by Gerard Jones, with art and cover by Pat Broderick and Bruce Patterson. $1.00

HAWK & DOVE #16
It's Hawk versus Dove as the partners are set against one another by the Lords of Chaos and Order who gave them their powers. Written by Barbara and Karl Kesel, with art and cover by Greg Guler and Scott Hanna. Cover by Guler and Karl Kesel. $1.00

HAWKWORLD #4
Hawkwoman takes to the crime-filled streets of Chicago with the local cops . . . and without a gun or her partner. Meanwhile, Byth takes control of an electronics firm on Earth in his continuing quest to take over Thanagar. Written by Tim Truman and John Ostrander, with art and cover by Graham Nolan. *(New Format.)* $1.50

HELLBLAZER #33
Things have gotten pretty quiet in Constantine's adventurous life, leading him to wonder where all the horror has gone . . . and if he'll find it before it finds him. Written by Jamie Delano, with pencils by Dean Motter and inks by Mark Pennington. Painted cover by Kent Williams. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.50

THE HUNTRESS #18
Part 2 of the 3-part "Batman and The Huntress": The Dark Knight and The Huntress work together to save New York City from an explosive menace. Written by Joey Cavalieri, with art and cover by Joe Staton and Bob Smith. *(Suggested for Mature Readers.)* $1.00

JUSTICE LEAGUE AMERICA #42
Maxwell Lord starts a new membership drive as a member returns, and a trade is made with Manga Khan. And who will be the newest member of the League . . . El Diablo? Starman? Hawk & Dove? Written by Keith Giffen and J.M. DeMatteis, with art by Mike McKone and José Marzan, Jr. Cover by Adam Hughes. $1.00

JUSTICE LEAGUE EUROPE #17
The JLE's in another dimension battling a team of super-villans . . . but win or lose, their chances of getting back home don't look good at all. Written by Keith Giffen and William Messner-Loebs, with art by Bart Sears and Randy Elliott. Cover by Sears. $1.00

JUSTICE LEAGUE INTERNATIONAL QUARTERLY #1
Meet The Conglomerate, Booster Gold's new group of super-heroes, including Maxi-Man, Praxis, Gypsy, Echo, Vapor, and Reverb. They're funded by some of the country's top companies, but are they heroes . . . or corporate puppets? This 80-page premiere issue of the quarterly is written by Keith Giffen and J.M. DeMatteis, with art by Chris Sprouse and Bruce Patterson. Cover by Sprouse. $2.95

L.E.G.I.O.N. '90 #19
The L.E.G.I.O.N. stages a triumphant return to Cairn . . . only to have Vril Dox fire one of them. Also, a horrifying mother/daughter reunion. Written by Alan Grant, with art by Jim Fern and John Nyberg. Cover by Garry Leach. *(New Format.)* $1.50

L.E.G.I.O.N. '90 Annual #1
Vril Dox and his L.E.G.I.O.N. travel to Colu to settle the score with Brainiac . . . but Superman's on hand to try to prevent Vril from committing murder. Written by Alan Grant, with art by Jim Fern and Jeff Albrecht. Cover by Jerry Bingham. *(New Format.)* $2.95

LEGENDS OF THE DARK KNIGHT #10
Part 5 of the 5-part "Gothic": The Batman and Mr. Whisper meet for their final confrontation in Gotham Cathedral, forcing the Dark Knight to confront a power even he can't reconcile. Written by Grant Morrison, with art and cover by Klaus Janson. *(Deluxe Format.)* $1.50

THE LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES #11
The bloody conflict between the Legion and Roxxas nears its climax with bodies of Legionnaires left behind in the aftermath. Plus, a special sequence starring two former Legionnaires, Matter-Eater Lad and Polar Boy. Written by Keith Giffen, Tom and Mary Bierbaum, and Al Gordon, with art by Giffen, Craig Brasfield, and Gordon. Cover by Giffen and Gordon. *(Deluxe Format.)* $1.75

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES Annual #1
Glorith destroys the planet of Daxam, just for kicks, and the Legion must bring her to justice . . . but they can't get past her shocking connection to one of their team members. Written by Tom and Mary Bierbaum, with art by Dougie Braithwaite, Larry Mahlstedt, and Doug Hazlewood. Cover by Adam Hughes and Al Gordon. *(Deluxe Format.)* $3.50

LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES Postcards
It's a brand-new set of 15 full-color postcards featuring new and returning Legionnaires from the ongoing LEGION OF SUPER-HEROES series. The heroes depicted include Ultra Boy, Cosmic Boy, Chameleon Boy, White Witch, Element Lad, Timber Wolf, and nine others. Each card is drawn by Keith Giffen and Al Gordon, with color by Tom McCraw. $8.00

BOOKS SHIPPING IN JULY

☐ **'MAZING MAN Special #3**
'Mazing Man is back, along with all his pals 'n' gals, in five all-new stories featuring the continued adventures of everybody's favorite bucket-headed costumed crimefighter. Written by Bob Rozakis, pencilled by Stephen DeStefano, and inked by various artists including Kyle Baker and Todd McFarlane. Cover by DeStefano and Karl Kesel. $2.00

☐ **MISTER MIRACLE #19**
Mister Miracle returns to Earth, but following the events of JUSTICE LEAGUE AMERICA #42, he finds Big Barda in jail . . . and everybody thinking him dead. Written by Doug Moench, with art by M.D. Bright and Romeo Tanghal. Cover by Adam Hughes. $1.00

☐ **NEW GODS #19**
Yuga Khan wreaks havoc throughout the universe and even the New Gods are powerless to stop him. Written by Mark Evanier, with art by Rick Hoberg and Will Blyberg. Cover by Paris Cullins and Blyberg. $1.50

☐ **THE NEW TITANS #70**
A special spotlight issue on The Terminator as someone is trying to destroy a fledgling country's chance at freedom. Written by Marv Wolfman, with art and cover by Steve Erwin and Will Blyberg. *(Deluxe Format.)* $1.75

☐ **THE SANDMAN #19**
There's no business like show business as the Sandman gets a performance, Mr. Shakespeare gets stage fright, and Bottom gets an ass's head. Written by Neil Gaiman, with art by Charles Vess. Painted cover by Dave McKean. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **SHADE, THE CHANGING MAN #3**
Shade answers the riddle of the Dealey Plaza Sphinx . . . but does he learn the identity of JFK's assassin? Written by Peter Milligan, with art by Chris Bachalo and Mark Pennington. Painted cover by Brendan McCarthy. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **THE SHADOW STRIKES! #12**
The Chicago Mob's looking to move into legitimate businesses . . . any way they can. And when Lamont Cranston's friend becomes a target for takeover by Frank Nitti and the boys, The Shadow moves in. Written by Gerard Jones, with art and cover by Eduardo Barreto. *(Deluxe Format.)* $1.75

☐ **SPELLJAMMER™ COMICS #1**
Meet the Spelljamming crew of a living spaceship that plies the spaceways from star to star within the huge spherically enclosed solar systems of Wildspace, floating on highly flammable Phlogistan. Written by Barbara Kesel, with art by Michael Collins and Dan Panosian. Cover by Collins. *(New Format.)* $1.75

☐ **STAR TREK® #12**
Part 3 of the 3-part "Trial of James T. Kirk": Kirk and Spock are on the trail of the mysterious saboteur . . . and Kirk must survive the verdict from his trial. Written by Peter David, with art by Gordon Purcell and Arne Starr. Cover by Mark Bright and Starr. *(New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **STAR TREK:® THE NEXT GENERATION #12**
Another ship's pretending to be the *USS Enterprise* . . . and only Counselor Troi can hope to salvage the situation and stop the bloodshed. Written by Michael Jan Friedman, with art by Pablo Marcos. Cover by Jerome Moore. *(New Format.) $1.50*

☐ **STARMAN #26**
There's one Starman too many as the son of the *original* Starman turns up to claim his father's title, forcing Will to either fight or give up the right to use the name. Written by Roger Stern, with art by Dave Hoover and guest inker Carlos Garzon. Cover by Hoover. $1.00

☐ **SUICIDE SQUAD #44**
An ex-Justice Leaguer dies, and is replaced by the newest addition to the ranks of the Squad. Meanwhile, Captain Boomerang travels home to Australia to attend his mother's funeral, with only Deadshot for company. Written by John Ostrander and David M. DeVries, with art by Luke McDonnell, and cover by McDonnell and Geof Isherwood. $1.00

☐ **SUPERBOY #8**
Bizarro becomes the toast of the town as a performance artist . . . until Superboy steps in. Written by John Moore, with art by Jim Mooney and Art Adams. Cover by Kevin Maguire and Ty Templeton. $1.00

☐ **SUPERMAN #47**
Part 2 of the 3-part "Soul Search": Continued from ACTION COMICS #656. While Superman battles Blaze's hordes for the fate of Jimmy Olsen's and Jerry White's souls, Perry White and Lex Luthor confront each other at the hospital over Jerry . . . their son. Also, the return of Skyhook. Continues in ADVENTURES OF SUPERMAN #470. Written and pencilled by Jerry Ordway and inked by Dennis Janke. Cover by Ordway $.75

☐ **SWAMP THING #99**
While Mantango gathers together his destructive forces, Swamp Thing learns that Tefé's blood is demonically tainted, forcing him to confront her "natural" father . . . John Constantine. Written by Doug Wheeler, with art by Pat Broderick and Alfredo Alcala. Painted cover by John Totleben. *(Suggested for Mature Readers. New Format.)* $1.50

☐ **TIME MASTERS #8**
(of an 8-issue maxiseries)
The adventure across time concludes as Rip Hunter pursues Vandal Savage into the prehistoric past . . . the new future is rocked by a devastating nuclear exchange . . . and Bonnie Baxter finally discovers the shocking secret of the Illuminati. Written by Bob Wayne and Lewis Shiner, with art by Art Thibert and José Marzan, Jr. Cover by Thibert. *(New Format.)* $1.75

☐ **TSR WORLDS® COMICS Annual #1**
DC's line of TSR comics gets its first crossover as a living spaceship takes on a crew and a mission that involves characters from ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS, FORGOTTEN REALMS, and DRAGONLANCE—all of which is framed by a host story that introduces the new SPELLJAMMER series, which also makes its debut this month. The SPELLJAMMER story is by Barbara Kesel and Michael Collins, ADVANCED DUNGEONS & DRAGONS is by Kate Novak-Grubb and Dan Reed, DRAGONLANCE is by Dan Mishkin and Dave Hoover, FORGOTTEN REALMS is by Jim Lowder, R.A. Morales, and Dave Simons. The painted cover is by Larry Elmore. *(New Format.)* $3.95

☐ **WHO'S WHO #2**
(of a 16-issue maxiseries)
The all-new WHO'S WHO continues in its hole-punched, looseleaf format, featuring 24 new entries including Flamebird by Kevin Maguire, Metamorpho by Mark A. Nelson, Mordru by Arthur Adams and Al Gordon, Despero by Adam Hughes and Joe Rubinstein, Changeling by Tom Grummett and Al Vey, and many more. This issue's cover feature is Flash, by Greg LaRocque and José Marzan, Jr. $4.95

☐ **WONDER WOMAN #46**
A young friend of Vanessa's takes her own life, a tragedy beyond even the abilities of a Wonder Woman to prevent. Written by George Pérez and Mindy Newell, with art by Jill Thompson and Romeo Tanghal. Cover by Pérez and Thompson. $1.00

☐ **WORLD'S FINEST #2**
(of a 3-book miniseries)
The Batman and Superman switch cities in an effort to thwart The Joker's and Luthor's elaborate scheme to control the youth of Gotham City and Metropolis. Written by Dave Gibbons, with art by Steve Rude and Karl Kesel. Painted cover by Rude. *(Prestige Format.)* $3.95

people at WORK

MARK WHEATLEY and MARC HEMPEL

Here at Direct Currents we usually like to profile our creators one at a time, but this month the circumstances of the project we're spotlighting demands we do things just a little differently. Mark Wheatley and Marc Hempel are best known for their work together on numerous projects, and Breathtaker, the four-book Prestige Format miniseries which makes its debut this month is no exception. But, as usual, we'll let them tell you about it in their own words.

Wheatley: I was born in 1954 in Portsmouth, Virginia. I've been interested in comics since I was a kid. All the kids had comic books but I didn't know where they came from. As far as I was concerned, comics came from other kids.

I ended up with about five or ten comic books at one point, comics that had traded around the neighborhood for years. They had pages missing so I had to make up a lot of the stories. I was about ten or eleven years old before I figured out that they probably came from a store somewhere.

I started drawing spontaneously when my parents took my comic books away from me in the fifth grade. I said, you can't do that, I'll draw my own . . . and I just kept doing it.

Hempel: I was born in 1957 in Evanston, Illinois, just outside of Chicago. I've been drawing since I was about two years old. I probably picked up my interest in sequential art from animated movies and TV shows, like Huckleberry Hound, Clutch Cargo . . .

Wheatley: I'm a member of the Clutch Cargo fan club.

Hempel: Actually, Mark and I both have cartoon lips superimposed over our real mouths. Anyway, I think the first comic book I ever bought was a Jimmy Olsen Annual, around 1964 or 1965 and ever since then, comics have pretty much been a special part of my life. Then I went on to other stuff, like Marvels. I guess I ended up being a Marvel fan . . . I was at the right age for being into the Marvel comics of those days.

Wheatley: I guess the fact that I produced a fanzine was my major education in comics. And that, by the way, was where I met Marc. We've been working together since 1974, starting with this fanzine, Nucleus. I started working for the printer that printed Nucleus and learned all about the printing business, and I ended up by establishing a design division for them. Then I went off to college . . . and they tried to teach me the stuff I'd spent the summer learning at the printers.

While I was in college I did a newspaper strip for the school paper, which ran for about two years and met with almost no response. I was also the art director for the Virginia Department of Agriculture. And because I didn't have enough to do, in my free time I got together with a band called Seventh Dawn that released an album . . . and that went over just about as big as everything else.

Hempel: I majored in painting in college and I did a lot of cartooning both in high school and college.

Wheatley: Marc's stuff back then was infuriatingly good.

Hempel: Gee, thanks. Anyway, college actually opened up a lot of new avenues of

possibilities for me. I took a lot of modern art history and contemporary art, did a lot of weird paintings that I didn't know anything about. So when I went back to comics and illustration, I found I was much freer in that form, had more ideas and had a more open attitude about everything. I wanted to get into comics.

I got my first rejection from Marvel when I was 14. Then I got a favorable rejection from Charlton when I was 17. They said my inks were a little bit heavy-handed, but that I should check back with them later. I didn't get a chance to do that.

Wheatley: I got to New York to look for work the week after Charlton ceased publication. And it was maybe three, four months after that that DC had its infamous Implosion, so, boy, my timing was just perfect.

Hempel: I got my degree . . .

Wheatley: It was the third degree, wasn't it?

Hempel: . . . And Mark invited me out to Insight Studios . . .

Wheatley: He came for the weekend.

Hempel: . . . And it turned into a real long weekend. Nearly ten years later, I'm still here.

Wheatley: I was acting as Marc's agent in New York, representing him to the comics companies. His first professional piece was one I sold to Gasm, which was a book I'd helped to get started.

Hempel: That was in 1978.

Wheatley: And then after that . . . let's see, I didn't actually sell any of your stuff to Heavy Metal, did I?

Hempel: No.

Wheatley: But I sold a story to Epic.

Hempel: Yeah, Epic Illustrated . . . Mark sold them a four-page story, "Elephant Grass," which was done as a senior class project and a couple of subsequent things as well.

Wheatley: We didn't start collaborating until Marc realized there was no hope of his meeting a deadline on the Interplanetary Spy paperback book series that Byron Preiss produced for Bantam Books. Then we started collaborating, boy, real quick. And it was a painful experience because neither one of us had ever worked with anyone else. We were accustomed to doing our own work, 100% from start to finish.

After we were finished with that, we said we'd never do that again . . . and then about a month or two later, I started developing *Mars* for First Comics. Marc got kind of curious about it and after a while I asked him if he wanted to work on it with me. That's really what I consider our first thought-out collaboration.

Following *Mars* we were universally hailed as a new creative force in the industry . . . that nobody really wanted to hire. We did some work for Marvel, individually and together, and then we did *Blood of Venus*, which was done over a long weekend. It was America's first weekly comic book series. That's weekly, not Wheatley. I wrote that for Warp Graphics in collaboration with Rich Shanklin. That was fairly successful, so they decided they wanted a Dracula series, so Rich came up with *Blood of Dracula*, which I've been editing for the past few years. That's spun off into a couple of other titles, *Dracula in Hell* and *The Bat*.

Hempel: We also did Jonny Quest for a while, 18 issues, written by Bill Loebs, which I drew most of the time and Mark inked and colored most of the time.

I'm getting the second book of *Gregory* ready to go for Piranha Press . . . the first book came out last year, right after Jonny Quest. It's been nominated, I might add, for a Harvey award.

Wheatley: During the Jonny Quest period I also did *Prince Nightmare*, for Aaaargh! Associated Artists, which was our joint publishing venture. We loved answering the phone for that . . . "Hello. AAAARGH!"

These days we've got the breakdown of creative chores pretty well defined. Actually, when we started doing *Mars*, we decided we were each going to share the responsibilities equally, although we didn't want to define what we were doing in the credits, so we signed everything "by Wheatley and Hempel" and alternated top billing. Nowadays, like with Breathtaker, I'm doing the writing and creation of the piece and he's doing the pencilling and inking.

Everybody thinks Marc and I collaborate on everything we do, but we don't work much differently than if we worked a hundred miles apart, the way most comic book artists do. We just happen to have studios across the hall from each other, but we rarely bother each other when we're working because we respect what the other guy's doing.

But on Breathtaker, we kind of decided we weren't going to collaborate, that each of us would have complete authority over our own areas. By making that decision, I think we've come up with our most successful joint effort ever. I'm not quite sure why, but this is probably the smoothest melding of ideas that we've ever come up with. Marc's interpretation of what I wrote is just marvelous.

I think one of the things that's worked so well is that we share a basic storytelling trait, which I call the "dream camera." That is, we don't try to copy film or television techniques, or even other comics techniques. We like to move our images and themes the same way you would if you were in a dream, so that when something takes on importance in the dream, you're suddenly rushed upon it, like a quick zoom. The angle of view represents an emotional attachment to the people or the object or the action so that the drawing becomes expressive to reflect the emotional content or action of the dream.

Hempel: I think the characters and the stories and the emotions draw the pictures. I don't really even think about what I'm doing. I'm basically focused on what's happening in the story and the art just kind of happens by itself. It seems to me that that's the most natural way to do comics.

Wheatley: After Breathtaker, we're in negotiation for at least one new project at DC, which we can't go into here.

And we have Insight Studios, which does production work for most of the major publishers in this industry. We job color separations and provide color production work for the different companies. We've developed and are the exclusive authors of a painted art separation system called Stableline, which is sweeping the industry in popularity . . . and I'm serious about that.

Hempel: We keep busy.

Wheatley: Sure do.

STRANGE ADVENTURES

From the DC Archives, the origin of Animal Man is told in STRANGE ADVENTURES #180.

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